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at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 60th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MAYCOCK (Barbados)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 132: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS TRANSITION ASSISTANCE GROUP (continued) (A/45/997 and Corr.1 and A/45/1003; A/C.5/45/L.29)

1. Mr. CONMY (Ireland), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/45/L.29, said that the beginning of paragraph 5 should be revised to read: "Invites Member States to consider the utilization of the credits due to them to be set off against their assessed contributions ...", in order to reflect the agreement reached in informal consultations. The draft resolution related to an unprecedented situation: an account for a peace-keeping operation which had terminated with resources in excess of net estimated revised costs. Paragraphs 2 and 3 of the resolution meant that all Member States' obligations to the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) were being revised in the light of the new net estimated costs. States whose payments were in excess of their revised obligations would be credited with the difference, and States which were still in arrears would have their arrears of assessed contributions reduced. Member States had expressed an interest in the interest earnings on the UNTAG account, as reflected in paragraph 7 of the draft resolution, a matter which would no doubt be considered at the forty-sixth session. Paragraphs 8, 9 and 10 reflected a compromise on the shortfall for funding repatriation by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Pending consideration of that matter, the amount would remain in the UNTAG Special Account. Lastly, those Member States that were still in arrears were urged to pay their assessed contributions.

2. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.5/45/L.29 without a vote.

3. It was so decided.

4. Mr. ANNAN (Controller) said that diligent investment by the Secretariat of amounts in the Special Account had led to the accrual of interest. The fact that UNTAG was being liquidated with a surplus balance had resulted in a number of technical difficulties, including the question of what amount of interest should be credited to particular Member States, since contributions had not been received from all Member States at the same time, and, indeed, some States had paid their contributions after the Mission had officially terminated at the end of March 1990. Discussion of the financing of UNTAG provided an opportunity to consider the broader question of the cash-flow problems attending the start-up of peace-keeping operations. As an initial step, thought could be given to retaining interest earned on contributions received for such purposes. The matter should be thoroughly considered both by the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee before any recommendations were made to the Assembly.

5. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) said that his delegation shared the concern expressed by the Controller regarding the smooth start-up of peace-keeping operations, a question which had been the subject of considerable debate. The Secretariat had proposed an increase in the size of the Working Capital Fund, a proposal that was under consideration by the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee. It would be well to resolve that issue first, before considering the new elements referred to by the Controller. With regard to the unencumbered balance in respect of the UNTAG operation, his delegation would welcome further information on the interest earned, which, by the end of 1989 alone, had amounted to more than $11 million.

6. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 132.

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7. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that he wished the Secretariat to look into the question of excess documents, sometimes as many as 50 or 100 copies, delivered to his delegation above and beyond its requirements. Delegations should receive only the quantities of documents they specifically requested.

The meeting rose at 11.20 p.m.